Smuggling of Drugs

2206. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether trafficking of heroin, opium and hashish has gone down inrecent months but methequalone commonly known as mandrax has emerged as a problem drug for the enforcement agencies; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to prevent smuggling of this drug?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Since smuggling of narcotic drugs like heroin, opium, hashish and mandrax is a clandestine activity, it cannot be said definitely whether it has increased or otherwise. As regards, Methaqualone (Mandrax) effective enforcement efforts have resulted in an all time high seizure of nearly 42 tonnes of Methaqualone during 1994. also during the year, 7 clandestine manufacturing units of methaqualone were destroyed in the country.

(b) Instructions have been issued to all the enforcement agencies to maintain utmost vigil and step up enforcement efforts under the stringent provisions contained in NDPS Act. Trainning is being imparted to officers to improve their effectivness. Vehicles and communication equipments have been provided. A part of Indo-Pak border has been fenced. BSF and coast Guards, who are deployed on land and coastal borders have been vested with the powers under the Customs Act to interdict narcotics drugs on the border in addition to the Central and State Governments enforcement agencies empowered under the NDPS Act.

Conference Held by CBDT

2207. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Board of Direct Taxes recently held a two-day Conference of Chief Commissioners and Director-General of Income 'ax in Delhi;

(b) if so, the subjects discussed and the conclusions reached at this Conference; and

(c) whether Government have accepted their conclusions: if so, whether these will be implemented by Government in the current year'.'

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V CHANDRASKHEHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) The following subjects were broadly discussed during the Conference:—

(i) Review of action Plan with locus on Budget collection and recovery of tax arrears;
(ii) Modernisation/Computerisation in the Income-tax Department;
(iii) widening the tax base:
(iv) Administrative improvement in the working of the Income-tax department: and
(v) Investigation and conduct of survey & search operations.

The decisions of the Conference are as under:—

(i) Finalisation of the report on midterm & long-term plan strategy:
(ii) Constitution of a Research Cell:
(iii) Improving the working environment of the field offices:
(iv) Proper implementation of the pre-emptive purchase of property;
(v) Allotment of new Permanent Account Numbers (PAN) to the existing assessees:
(vi) Chalking out of training programme for the officers and staff of the Department: and
(vii) Statement of an assessee during the course of a search to be recorded in the presence of his councel. if the assessee so desires. (c) Most of the recommendations have been accepted by the Government and necessary steps have been taken for their speedy implementation.

Various Tax Reforms

2208 SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY:
SHRI T VENKATRAM REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering

several tax reforms to bring the country's tax system in tune with the ongoing efforts to integrate the India's economy with global economy;

(b) if so, whether the matter has been finalised; and

(c) the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (c) During the last few years, the Government have undertaken several tax reforms to integrate the Indian economy with the global economy. This is an on-going process. The salient features of the tax reforms are moderate rates of taxes/ duties, simplicity and certainty of procedure and effective administration of tax laws.

Fraud And Irregalarities Cities in Banks

2209. SHRI T. VENKATRAM REEDY:
SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the cases of frauds, robberies/dacoities and irregularities detected in the Public Sector Banks during 1993,1994 and so far, State-wise;

(b) the persons held responsible for the above cases;

(c) the action taken against them; and

(d) the mount of compensation paid to the Bank employees and customers injured or died during decoities in banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Chargesheet Against Former Officials of New Bank of India

2210. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Bureau of Investigation recently filed a chargesheet against some former senior officials of the New Bank of India and owners of Dream City Builders for cheating the Bank to the tune of Rupees 1.69 crore or so;

(b) if so, the progress made by them in regard to the investigation and when it is expected to be completed; and

(c) the steps proposed to be. taken by Government to recover the amount from the culprits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, the investigation has been completed and chargesheet has been filed on 23.12.94 in the Court of Special Judge, Delhi against the accused persons.

(c) The question of recovery of the amount from the culprits depends on the outcome of the Court's decision.

Branches of Privates Insurance Companies

2211. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of branch offices of private life insurance companies in 1955 the year immediately preceding the nation' Jisation, and the actual number of branches in rural areas at present; and

(b) the total amount of business transacted in rural areas and the percentage of rural business in the total business during the last three years.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASKHEHAR MURTHY): (a) As per information available the total number of Branch offices of Private Life Insurance Companies in 1955 was 249. Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) have reported that at present, out of a total number of 2008 Branches, they have 776 city branches and 1232 Mofussil Branches.